INTERVIEW WITH MR. W. CHESTER TAYLOE

May 12, 1976

Conducted by:

Dr. James L. Dodson

--and--

Mrs. Karen Sheridan

Dodson: You are about to hear an interview with Mr. Chester Tayloe, President of the Los Angeles Valley College Historical Museum Association. The date is May 12, 1976.

Dodson: ... Tayloe, how long have you lived in the valley?

Tayloe: Fifty years.

Dodson: Were you born here in the valley?

Tayloe: I was born in East Hollywood, but it was all one are in those days. And we used to come out here to get fruit and see the area and we have friends out in the valley, too.

Dodson: There was quite a bit of fruit raising here, then?

Tayloe: A great deal. About 1917, the phys ed teacher of Hollywood High School and the phys ed teacher of L. A. came out and they camped right near the public library there, under those eucalyptus trees. And they traded apricots for quince. Some of the boys that came out... we were there for about three weeks, and the boys would come out and pick apricots and then they get so much trays or something, for doing that for three weeks.

Dodson: This particular part of the valley, then, was characterized by fruit raising at that time?

Tayloe: A great deal of it. A great deal! Walnuts, grapes, peaches, uhm... they had a couple of canneries up there near Lankershim and Chandler. Either a lot of canning or drying fruit, a great deal of it was dried. Of course, grapes they were made into wine.

Dodson: This was after the Lankershim Interest have experimented with growing wheat in this part of the valley, then? I would suppose.

Tayloe: Oh the wheat was further out, the wheat was further out. And there was a lot of it out there, yes.

Dodson: That's a little hard for some of us to imagine the valley as a wheat growing area. Do you remember the wheat growing?

Tayloe: Oh, I... my cousin had a motorcycle and I had a bicycle and we wanted to see what was up the valley and we went out on a very shaky road, which was called Ventura Boulevard. I had a rope between the motorcycle and myself and my bike. And we went clear on out to Ventura and there wasn't much of a farmland. I've got pictures of some of that area, it's just nothing out there except for the little farmhouse here and there. And the road wasn't much either.

Dodson: You actually went to school in Hollywood, but not here in the valley?

Tayloe: Hollywood High School, they had no schools except grammar schools out here. The street car-- the red car-- used to stop every morning at Hollywood Station and rode them up and take them in to Hollywood High School which was on Highland and Sunset.

Dodson: Well, even though we didn't have any high schools here, I imagine that the education you got was also typical of those of people living the valley. Could you tell us a little about what courses you took, what sort of an education it was?

Tayloe: Well I sometimes wonder why I did some of them that I did, because I was curious and I took pattern making and foundry. We had a nice shop there in Hollywood High School and I did take Spanish and Latin and some of the other things, too. And didn't do too bad with those. But later on, during the war, when we couldn't get parts, I built my own bronze furnace out here in the backyard. And made my own sand patterns and sand castings and I can continue with my hobby. And so I got quite a little that way. My dad was a contractor in Hollywood. We worked out here some, in oh...'14, '15. And I worked with him a great deal so I had a little education along those lines.

Dodson: Do you have any opinion whether your education in those days was better or poorer than education today? You have a son in the educational field, so maybe you have some opinions.

Tayloe: Well he's got me out classed on some fields, ha ha... However, I had a little tangle with one of my study hall teachers. I delivered the Times in a large are of East Hollywood all during high school. My folks insisted that I get my studying done and so I would read the National Geographic and the study hall teacher took a dim view of it, went in to see the principal. And then I went in to see the principal. But he told me that he'd give me a special medal if I got on the honor roll. And so I got all A's except a B+ and I thought that was doing pretty well. But, no, I'm intrigue with some of the things that are going on in some schools today. I think the kids have a marvelous opportunity over what we had. Because, we had a different sort of a field, we didn't have all these things... advanced ideas

and all, I've tried to keep up with them. And I do a lot of reading.

Dodson: Do you feel that the curriculum is more limited in those days, then?

Tayloe: Oh yes, yes.

Dodson: Could you tell us something about social life in the valley, when you were a teenager? What did you do for amusements?

Tayloe: Well we had to make our own in those days, we didn't just pick up and go. Of course, many times we'd get on the Pacific Electric and go to Sierra Madre and hike to Mount Wilson or we'd come out here on a ranch where they had strawberries and horses and straw. We could load up the top of the flat bed and then wander around the valley on a moonlight night. Teenagers, you know, well we enjoyed it. And then we'd come into town or we'd come out here from time to time, various people always do. And then with the religious part of it, of course, being the folks founding... part of the founding group of the First Presbyterian Church or Hollywood, several of them had ranches out here especially in and around Toluca Lake. And I had an opportunity to work on some of those ranches and come out and spend two or three days with one of the boys. If we get a little hungry, we'd get down around dusk to the river and wait and pretty soon we'd saw our dinner come by. And we'd generally got it.

Dodson: Was the Lankershim ranch still in existence at that time, or do you recall?

Tayloe: Oh yes, sure. Sure.

Dodson: Did you ever happen to work on that one?

Tayloe: No, no, no. I... we... dad built some houses out in here. And then we did quite a little work on the... where Bob Hope lives now, and all that area in there... in those days. But not too much... I knew them, because Hollywood was fairly close by and there was activity between the two places. Then later on, when I started working for the Hollywood National, we handled a lot of the work for Universal City. We cashed their paychecks or we... uh, Fred Weddington... he'd come in and get some money to keep his outfit going. On payday and we had that... a lot of carrying out between the areas. And with people, clear way on out even into the valley. Most of that time we had to travel horse and buggy.

Dodson: What sort of a religious life did you have then? Would you say that people were more religious than they are now?

Tayloe: Well, we got more people now than we did. You know there wasn't too many things to do in those old days. Sure, they had socials in the village hall or some place like that. But I enjoyed my early days. Of course I was a youngster when they started the Presbyterian Church, and later on I taught sunday school and was very active with the Epsworth League which has to do with the young people. And so... I've been going there ever since.

Dodson: Is that the First Presbyterian Church in Hollywood that you're referring to?

Tayloe: Yeah.

Dodson: And you're a member of that now, are you then?

Tayloe: I've been in that for seventy odd years.

Dodson: I see. Incidently, you have contributed to the museum a chapel car. Can you tell us, just what that is?

Tayloe: Well, in 1891, the first chapel car was built for the American Baptist Publication Society which was similar to the then used old green pullmans. It was about eighty, eighty-five feet long, eleven feet wide whereas the old pullmans were ten feet wide. And they had oak pews in the car. And the church activity carry about five-seventh and the preacher and his wife lived in two-seventh of the car. And travelled all over the country, and they always put it on the back end of the car. And so the people in the forward sections could come back and join the service and have a singing session and what have you. But, one of them, I've copied the manual which was partly on the sitings of that one in 1914. From which 15 got together and started the First Baptist Church of Van Nuys, now some 9,000 strong.

Dodson: You became a banker, Mr. Tayloe, at what point in your life did you decide to do that? What were your early vocational aims? Did you always plan that sort of a career?

Tayloe? No I didn't. No, I... fortunately I went to business college so I had a little background in that. But, the building game, I've been a contractor kind of went flat! During the years way back in '14 or '15.

One of my buddies called up and "Hey, we've got a job down here at the Hollywood National Bank in Hollywood and Cahuenga, come on down!" So my reaction was, it wouldn't hurt to get some further education. That's all, I didn't expect to stay very long. And so I went down and started as a lowly statement clerk and some of those things, but I guess I enjoyed it. And the conditions were such that I moved along pretty well. Of course World War I came in there and I had a little interlude with that. I moved very fast so that I became an officer and in the new branch of Vermont and Hollywood in February of 1922. And I stayed there forty and a half years. Well, they didn't feel that they should move me, I had too many friends. That was my old stamping ground, that's where I was born and raised. I knew everybody in the area that were there in those days and so by getting out and among them and soon you build up a good clientele. And so I just stayed with it, I had a family by that time, too. I got married in 1921. And when I got back from my honeymoon I was requested to go down and see the president of the bank, and I was given this assignment as an officer of Vermont and Hollywood... kind of tied in.

Dodson: Now, you mentioned a little interlude during World War I, were you involved actively in the war?

Tayloe: Well, yes and no. Not, I was not overseas, I didn't have to go and I didn't. I wasn't quite old enough to get in that soon. They tried to keep me here and worked with the quarter master but I didn't want to do that. I did help with the examining of the incoming boys and things like that. But then it quit at about that time, so I was lucky.

Dodson: Do you remember how the Armistice was celebrated here in the valley? At that time, do you remember the emotional reaction, if there was one?

Tayloe: Oh, everybody was delighted with it, of course! And a lot of these that had their names down on the list, they went out and tied one on! Ha ha ha... I'm sure... I know what I did.

Dodson: Do you think there was any difference in the reaction of local people to World War I and World War II?

Tayloe: Well... there was not... there were not as many people in the area... so we knew pretty well everybody in World War I. In World War II, it was a small group here and there, so I don't think it had the same...small groups that joined in, like we did. But there wasn't the same overall feeling as I know it, on World War II.

Dodson: I was just wondering whether you thought there was more enthusiasm for the first war or the second or anything like that? Or whether you saw any difference?

Tayloe: Well, you just took it in stride, you just took it in stride. They didn't exactly wanted some of these things, we didn't see why we had to but you get in it and then you just go ahead, that's all there is to do. And make the best of it, try to get as far along as you can. A lot of the boys I grew up with lost their lives, both on the ground and in the air. But they did in World War II as well. But, I think it went pretty well in a matter of course.

Dodson: Now, one of the things that we wanted to ask you

about is this matter of bringing water into the valley, which of course was so tremendously important in the development of the valley. Was this one of the factors that caused the annexation of the valley to Los Angeles, would you say?

Tayloe: To a certain extent, yes, because they had to have the water and they wanted to go on down. That's the reason for many of the deed and everything covering the water... so that it becomes part of the city... there were wells all over the valley. But it was quite a project, I used to go up the line and watched them working on up on the aqueduct, and I had met Mulholland and so I was in favor of what they were doing, of course. And it's always interesting to get out and see what's going on.

Dodson: In my home state of Colorado, we have a very complex code of water laws. You could have a stream going through your property and not be allowed to take one drop of water out of it. Is that true here?

Tayloe: Well, there's been a lot of arguments between Burbank and some of the others because they wanted to drill and take water from the underground, which had been deeded to the city of Los Angeles.

Dodson: I remember seeing in the paper that there was a controversy between Glendale and Los Angeles over water in the Los Angeles River. It was finally settled on the basis of a grant by King Charles III, I believe, of Spain. So apparantly some of those water grants went clear back into the Spanish period.

Tayloe: Way back, way back.

Dodson: Did you personally ever see Mr. Mulholland?

Tayloe: Oh yes.

Dodson: Do you have any recollections of him that you can give us?

Tayloe: Well, he was a pretty good size man and as far as my contact with him was concerned, very genial. In my early days, I grew up with the Chandler family. At the time my godfather lived downtown in one of the gingerbread houses on Oak Street. And we were involved with many of the early settlers, even out here in the valley, they were all part of the movement going on around. So that I saw many of them in the early days, and then of course in the banking, I saw many more.

Dodson: I believe the Chandlers did own some land here in the valley.

Tayloe: Yeah, a big hunk of it, yes. A big piece.

Dodson: And that I guess, has all been sold?

Tayloe: Oh, I think it's all gone now. As a matter of fact, one of my first customers when I opened up the branch at Vermont and Hollywood was Mrs. Harry Chandler. And I used to deliver The Times all during high school to their home up on off of ...?... And as I say, the boys were similar ages and you got together many times in some of these different social activities. Like my ...?... had an interest in the Hollywood Hotel at one time. That was quite a meeting place. And of course ...?... got a hold of it later. And he didn't have too much out here

in the valley that I know of. He had a lot of it in Hollywood. But, Weddington had a lot of it, Lankershim had a lot, and uhm, I don't recall Amestoy. Now, the old man had a property downtown as well as the ranch but I don't recall meeting him. I might have, but I don't recall it.

Dodson: Did you ever meet any members of the Van Nuys family? Or the Whitsetts, any of those?

Tayloe: Yeah.

Dodson: Could you give us any of your impressions of them?

Tayloe: Well, they were just pleasant people to be around. Same way with the Lockheed boys. I knew them before er... when they first started the plant out here. They were just ordinary people! And I enjoyed talking to them. They had ideas.

Dodson: Are any members of the Van Nuys or Whitsetts or Lankershims families living in the valley at the present time, to your knowledge?

Tayloe: I haven't been in contact with them for quite a while. I wouldn't be surprised if some of them are, yes. They stick around, you know, when they've been raised in the area. It's a nice area. I don't know, I'm not personally dealing with them.

Dodson: Now one of the things that's very much in the news at the present time is this question of earthquakes. And whether we're going to have some more. Do you recall any of the early ones, did you feel the Long Beach earthquake? In...

Tayloe: Well, why don't I go back to the San Francisco earthquake?

Dodson: Well, fine.

Tayloe: I was ...?... asparagus out in the garden when that thing hit. We felt it down here in L.A.

Dodson: I had another person told me that. And I was very much surprised. I didn't know that that tremor was felt this far south, but it was. Was it very severe? That is, did you feel much of a shake?

Tayloe: Well not like uh... Oh, we felt a definite shake. We knew something was going on. We didn't know where, but we knew something was going on. It wasn't long until we found out that it was in San Francisco.

Dodson: Was it strong enough here to do any damage?

Tayloe: No, not that I know of. Long Beach uh, I felt that all right. We were... I was working at Vermont and Hollywood at the time that thing hit. And I thought the windows were all going to break out of the branch building. And I had a brother-in-law who had a grocery store down on Third and Ximeno in Long Beach, he finally got through to me and I went down the next morning, early. But it's taken the front of his building, the building that he was in, and spread it all over the street. And all his canned goods and glass jars and everything spreading all over the street. So I went down the next morning and I was able to get through and saw the damage to the ....?.... I was down there. And it was a mess! Of course I've seen pictures of San Francisco and that was a mess too!

Dodson: Of course there I guess the fire after it did more damage than the quake itself.

Tayloe: Oh sure, sure.

Dodson: I think we learned one thing from those quakes: the danger of having unreinforced brick structures, from what I've read.

Tayloe: Yes, and... uh, oh I've felt other earthquakes over the years, too,but the one we had here on February 9th or something not too long back, it didn't bother me a bit here. Except to knock a couple of locomotives off its rail. But it was a pretty good shake. But of course, having built the house, I put certain protections into it.

Dodson: You're speaking of the 1971 Sylmar quake?

Tayloe: Yeah, yeah.

Dodson: That wasn't felt very strongly here in the southern part of the valley was it?

Tayloe: Well, if you mentioned the fact that the bed has jumped around and a few things like that, then... I , that was... I felt it, definitely! Because it sure moved the bed! And it shook! It shook real well. But I had no damage, it really didn't damage real much here, ...?... close to the center of the quake.

Dodson: I think I've seen some maps of fault lines which do not show any fault lines in this particular part of the valley, so probably you wouldn't feel a quake. Or you would be in much less danger of a severe quake

than other parts of the area.

Tayloe: Uh, you see, up along our Kenneth Road in Glendale, up along in there, there's a fault. And they get a pretty good shake when that comes on. But there isn't any right in here. And we're out on a sort of sandy soil, we don't seem to feel it as bad as we might if it was a harder soil.

Dodson: Can you think of some other important historic events in the history of the valley that we haven't been talking about that you think should be described?

Tayloe: Well, of course when industry began to come in like Lockheed and some of the others... larger plants the automobile plants went down further... it gave more activity and more income to the area than it has had before. Of course they chased the chicken ranches out, they had to go on up further up state but... that's primary, just the development in a very short time after some of these industries came in, they created a larger activity.

Dodson: Do you remember the founding of Lockheed? And the first models of their planes, what they were like? And that sort of thing?

Tayloe: I sure do. Sure do, we used to go over and watch it a lot. And as I say, I knew the boys. And I used to build model airplanes that would fly! In my younger days, with my boys. And I used to... we used to have a tire [?] plant out there, you know, where Lockheed went in. And... they had a clever idea. I knew their family. So, we're always interested in what's going on.

Dodson: Were their first model planes single engine planes? Or do you recall what the earliest models were?

Tayloe: I think so. I remember the old Ford trimotor that went out of there. That was of course three motors and that was a pretty good size. Uhm... I'll never forget my first airplane ride with Lincoln [?] ...?... it was a biplane. And we were flying around and he says, "How do you like it?" "Fine!" So he takes a dive right towards the Hollywood cemetery. But I had a seat belt around me and so I stayed with it. But it was an interesting experience, that was and old ...?... But I've flown in some of the others from over here... I think they had a single job [?] there at first.

Dodson: You mentioned the Ford trimotor, of course they didn't build that, but that just landed at their airport.

Tayloe: That's true, that was out over here.

Dodson: That happens to be the first plane that I ever took a ride in.

Tayloe: Oh yeah?

Dodson: Ford trimotor... And I read in the paper recently, that there were at least three of those still in active service in various parts of the world.

Tayloe: That's right, yes. Well, it's interesting to look back. Of course, the oldest boy flying out of B-17, with B-17, out of England. I was interested in what was going on there. As a matter of fact, I built some parts in my garage here for the 17... during the war.

Dodson: Could you tell us what parts you built? I knew that you had done some work for the government in that respect.

Tayloe: Well for the Lockheed, I... we were... relay switches primarily for them. But for the A-26 we built a lot of hydrolic cylinders...?... here. ...trained women to run the ...?...

Dodson: Could you tell us how the Great Depression of 1929 affected the valley, as far as you know? Or perhaps the effects on your family, maybe there was no effect?

Tayloe: Well, I might say that I worked more with people both in the valley and in Hollywood. As far as loans were in concern, which were in difficulty to work them out. And several of them worked out of them beautifully. One of them started raising flowers out here in the valley, and became one of the big flower growers in the west valley. And by working with him, we put off any forclosure until he was able to pay it off beautifully and uh... And another one that we were involved with, he ran into an idea that paid off handsomely and so we were repaid... nicely. But a lot of them panicked and wouldn't really try, they gave up. But those that fought for it, many of them came out...

Dodson: Was the bank forced to foreclose on many private homes, here in the valley, during that period?

Tayloe: Oh, quite a few of them. Quite a few of them, yes. I can't give you any ...?... but I'll tell you, there were a lot of them. Because, just as I said, they just gave up, out of jobs, and things... they couldn't carry it.

Dodson: Of course that was in the days before banking insurance. Did this affect the bank's solvency at the time?

Tayloe: Uh... I don't... I don't think there was any question about the solvent state of the bank. Because we had beeen conservative and we were on top of it all the time.

Dodson: Did any banks fail here in the valley to your knowledge?

Tayloe: No, I don't think any of them did.

Dodson: What would you say is the greatest change in the valley during your life time? Now of course there were a number of different types of changes, such as the appearance of the valley for instance. We put down such things such as fashions and fads, morality, politics, technology meaning methods of living. What impresses you most about changes as you've seen them during the years you've lived here?

Tayloe: The ability to get around and go places, with these new freeways and things. If we had to go slow freight like we did in the early days, it would take us forever and a day to get anywhere! I think it's all been for the better, a lot of people don't like it but you've got to be able to move rapidly if you're going to accomplish anything. Now, the freeways have been a big help in the valley here, and the ability to get around and move. And then of course, your industries and your shopping centers that are coming up ....

[Tape 1 side 1 ends]

Dodson: Do you have any personal opinions about such things as fashions, Mr. Tayloe? Or do you think only the ladies are interested in those things?

Tayloe: Well, I like to look at the ladies so I keep up with the fashions... ha ha ha... But no, I think it's an easier style of living today. They don't feel they got to dress up in tuxes all the time... easier. Well, for a working suits and things, they're well dressed and yet they're more of a leisurely type... outfits and uh, I sort of like it that way myself.

Dodson: You feel that life is a bit more relaxed now, than it was say fifty years ago? Would that be true?

Tayloe: Well, I relax myself. Doc told me to quit worrying about everybody else and enjoy myself day by day and let the rest of the world go by. No, I think it's somewhat slower for many people, some of them who've lived a fast pace. But you don't have to, as I say, to make a living.

Dodson: You think there are changes in fads, since your day? Do we have more of them?

Tayloe: A lot more, a lot more. Of course you've got sailplanes, and uh... well I've played around with a glider... ha ha ha... when I was a teenager. I didn't have quite nerve enough to jump off the top of the water tower with it. But we put a bicycle on it and uh... we can pump downhill and get off the ground with it a little bit. But I wouldn't take one of these sailplanes to jump off for anything. I just don't like the looks of it! So... but others who go got a kick out of it. But I had... you get a lot of things. As I said, we had to make

our own. I built my own roller coaster from the top of the water tower when we were teenagers. And then one fella leaned out when I said lean in, and then I had to tear it down. But we had to do our own maneuvering if we wanted anything to play with.

Dodson: Now, Mrs. Sheridan here loves to water ski, did you ever do any of that?

Tayloe: No, no, no, I would like to. I've done a lot of skating and a bunch of us with roller skates... in the old days there was a pavilion down at Playa Del Rey and we'd take a red car and go down the end of line and then picnicked down there. Good skaters would skate around the outside and the beginners would skate in on the ballroom floor. We used to have a ball that way. I got pretty good with roller skates but uh... no iceskates. Being out here you didn't have much chance for ice skating. I've ice skated, but not much...

Sheridan: Mr. Tayloe, did you use the beaches? Were the beaches as popular back then for teenagers as they are today?

Tayloe: I would say very definitely. Because that was a place to go and they'd be all over the beach. We had a lot of entertainment places down there and we had a big swimming pool freedom. And... oh, we spent many a time down there. We get off the street car and go on down the beach, Santa Monica, Playa Del Rey, Redondo, and Long Beach. Long Beach was quite a popular place as far as the kids were concerned.

Dodson: Then this is one thing that hasn't changed with the

passage of time. People respond to the beach then as now?

Tayloe: Same way as Venice. Venice was very popular. We used to have a little train down there that ran around. And then... I could remember the old fun house and the air blast that would have... blow the skirts up and things, you know. And then the big circular dealers and you try to stand in the center of it as you could without getting thrown off. Oh no, that was... we didn't have much to do otherwise if we didn't go down to the beach. That's where all the fun stuff was. Unless you went hiking or biking or something. There wasn't much in the way of entertainment. Oh, the Palladium was down... I guess it was the Palladium, a big ballroom, and Long Beach and another one down in Santa Monica. Later on, when we had the cars, we'd go down and enjoy ourselves and come home.

Dodson: Was the Long Beach Pike in existence at that time?

Tayloe: Yes it was. It was way back when. I happened to be in Long Beach having lunch. Right near the main pier on Empire they... oh I've forgotten what year it was but they wanted to get in to the ball room for something. And they started jumping on it, well the whole thing gave way and they all went down into the bottom so... I saw them spread out all over the beach....?.... Oh, that roller coaster down there, oh they had a lot of fun...

Dodson: What would you regard as the most important event in valley history?

Tayloe: Well, we've got several things that would have to come into it of course, the fact... again the fact

that industry came into here. And people began to spread out this way and you had to ...?... your home, where they're having the horses and other things... recreation areas and ... I think the good weather and water and some other activities are very involved, industry especially given....?.... I mean, they've helped a great deal.

Dodson: Is there anything in the history of the valley that you feel is unfortunate, that you wish hadn't happened?

Tayloe: Oh, I think you've got to take everything in stride. There has been some problem up in the Pacoima area, but there's other problems all around town anyway. And so I don't see any reason to become too disturbed over it. But uh, that's sort of ... maybe they were sort of pushed around as far as housing or living conditions, for quite a while. And of course it's been corrected to some extent. But on the whole it's been a pretty nice place all over the valley for people to live. And even for the poor class, there have been areas that they can go into.

Dodson: I've noticed at the present time, that there's some agitation for the secession of the valley from Los Angeles, do you feel that would be a good or bad thing?

Tayloe: Well, uhm, this game of politics if you see who's trying to push some of these things, and I think if we just get good representatives, the county or city government would be all right. But I think there's some greedy politicians would like to have it for their bigger part. And then they would be out here now. I don't, I don't think it's a good

deal, it isn't. You have tax problems, and all these things that we'd have to support. I think our taxes would go way up if we did.

Dodson: Do you know very much whether we ever had any friction with minorities in the valley? Or anything like that? Has that been a problem here as it had in other places?

Tayloe: Well, San Fernando was part of a little one, but I think they're getting it pretty well handled. They've got a lot of the Mexicans up there and colored in that area. Whenever you get too close together, you will always have some trouble. They've had quite a little trouble in the high school department. But I think they're pretty well curbing it, you don't hear much about it, anyway. Not the way it used to be. Of course I've lived with it all my life. We were in Hollywood when I was a kid. Went to school there, I didn't have any trouble. Of course they didn't dominate us either, there were just a few of them. But we always accepted them, when I was in school.

Dodson: Can you tell us, Mr. Tayloe, about any important historic sites or buildings, or monuments in the valley? Things that you feel should be investigated for the museum? What would you regard as our most important historical monument?

Tayloe: Well a lot depends on uh, what type of interest a person may have. Now, that Amestoy Mansion down there, which is a historical site, ...I think we've got fourteen all together in the valley. And they've all got a different type of background. Of course the mission out there has been very interesting. And I've gone into that. In the early days I've

seen a lot of it. And some of the ...?... house, adobes and some of those others. They have their own little types of interest in the set up, they all tie together, I assume. I wouldn't say any one, I think we should tie in to all... all of them represent... had some representations in our own museum. And I expect that would come up before too long.

Dodson: Do you know of any long time residents of the valley whose recollections should be recorded for the museum?

Tayloe: Well you're going to get somemore names from me very shortly that I think you should get. I think you'd need the names. I would like to ...?... I think he could get you some very very interesting information. Henry isn't well, but he can give you, there at the Federal Building and Loans, could get you some very interesting information. And have you been... you've taped Avila? Frank Avila?

Dodson: Yes, yes.

Tayloe: And uh, Buz [sp ?] Blanchard, could give you... cause he goes way back. He was a youngster of five years old when Lankershim and Chandler was a dusty spot on the road. And I'm sure he could give you some very interesting... Again our friend Fred Mendenhall, he's been in the valley a long time. His dad had the uh, very responsible set up in the area, the newspaper. And if you by any chance could get him, I think you could get him down to the school, to give a little seminar and tape it at the same time.

Dodson: Can you think of some significant change, an event,

or an anecdote that you believed should be recorded that we haven't asked about at all? There may be some things or thing that you think of that we haven't thought of?

Tayloe: Well, it isn't exactly part of the history, I guess, but uh, somebody told a chap that was deaf that if he took a good dive in an aeroplane with a pilot... that he would have his hearing restored. And so they preceded to take the dive but they didn't stop in time and ended up in Toluca Lake down here, clear into the mud... ha ha ha... I don't know if his hearing was restored or not.

Dodson: Many people wonder whether there was such a thing as Toluca Lake. Now I've asked you about this before, so you've convinced me there is a Toluca Lake. For putting it on the record, can you tell us how old Toluca Lake is? Is it a natural lake that's always been here? Or...?

Tayloe: ...natural springs in it and it got pretty mucky. And many years ago, why the people that moved in and around the lake had the bottom of it paved. And they've got some ...?... down there pushing water into it. And when my youngsters were small, they used to go down and crawdad hunting, all along the lake out there. The ranch went into it. When we went at noon to get our apple cider, part of the lake was right there, you might say. But it was... it was natural, in there at that time. Of course the river got to be... when they had that big flood, it took all... everything out. It changed a lot of the area on the other side. The lake is this side of the river, you see, the river ran on down below, and this other was here. But it's been sped lately

in the springs.

Dodson: I see. So is it fed artificially now, than...

Tayloe: ... primarily, primarily. Because they paved the bottom of it to get rid of that algae and slum stuff. They go boating on it, now and then, it's big enough to boat on... sailboat.

Dodson: Now, for the benefit of people who are interested in trying to find that lake, could you tell them where exactly to find it, to see it? Or is it available for the public to look at?

Tayloe: Well, if you try to drive up the Lakeside Golf Club, at the foot of Clybourne Avenue. The bridge just before you go into the parking lot, you look both ways and see the lake.

Dodson: Is it situated on private property? At the present time?

Tayloe: Well, private property borders it all around there, except for the bridge.

Dodson: Well I believe that's all we have in mind, Mr. Tayloe. Unless you can think of something else?

Tayloe: Well, Amelia Earhart...

Mrs. Tayloe: ...Amelia Earhart lived down there.

Tayloe: Yeah, Amelia Earhart lived on the other side of the lake.

Dodson: Is that right?

Tayloe: At one time... yes.

Dodson: Is Bob Hope's estate bordering on the lake?

Tayloe: No, that's right down here... four blocks, down four blocks. It's got a lot of ivy all around it.

Mrs. Tayloe: ...golf course...

Tayloe: He's got a little golf course at the back of it. And as you're going back, you're headed that way, it just go down. And you got a boulevard stop, and on the south side of the street there are no streets that cut through until you get at his corner... just past his place. It's a very dark brown house on the other corner. But it's all...in there... there's a couple of other buildings. His daughter lives in one with his grandson, ...?...

Voice: ...continue to see them every year...

Tayloe: Christmas.

Dodson: Well thank you very much, Mr. Tayloe, this will be a valuable addition to our museum collection of tapes.

Tayloe: Sure.

Dodson: You have just heard an interview with Mr. Chester Tayloe, president of the Los Angeles Valley College Historical Museum Association. The interview was conducted by Dr. James L. Dodson, curator of the museum, and Mrs. Karen Sheridan, field deputy to Dr. Dodson in collecting materials for the museum. The date is May 12, 1976.